

Gou. Doc.
Can
P

Canada. Prime Minister, 1935- (W.L.M. King)

CAI
PM
- 576

CANADA AND THE WAR

Government
Publications

THE DEFENCE
OF COMMON LIBERTIES

An Address to the Pilgrims of the United States

by

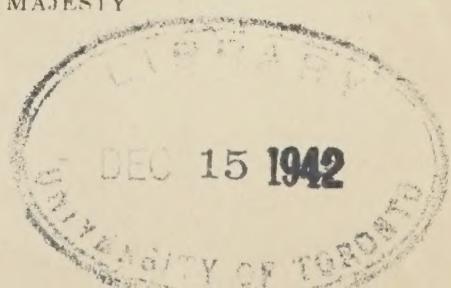
RIGHT HON. W. L. MACKENZIE KING, M.P.

Prime Minister of Canada

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 2, 1942



OTTAWA
EDMOND CLOUTIER
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
1942





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/3176112245253>

E.A.1
P.1
3937

CANADA AND THE WAR

THE DEFENCE OF COMMON LIBERTIES

An Address to the Pilgrims of The United States

by

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING, M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada

New York, December 2, 1942

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen:

May I express at once my sincere appreciation of the honour of having been invited to address The Pilgrims of the United States.

Your Society and its corresponding organization in Great Britain have as their object the promotion of the sentiment of brotherhood among the nations. More particularly, they seek the cultivation of friendly relations between citizens of the United States and those of the British Commonwealth. Had I been asked to define the principle upon which Canada has based her external relations, I could have found no clearer expression of our aims.

For this reason, I am happy to recognize in your invitation, a desire, on the part of members of The Pilgrims' Society, to give expression to the feelings of the people of the United States towards their neighbours of the North, with whom to-day they are united, as brothers in arms, in the defence of common liberties. For the recognition you have thus accorded my fellow-countrymen, I cannot thank you too warmly. By way of acknowledgment, I should like this evening to set forth a few significant facts which, I trust, may justify the appreciation you have sought to express.

You will doubtless expect me to speak of Canada's war effort. I believe it will be found not unworthy of the cause for which we fight.

Canada's Armed Forces

To-day, Canada has almost 600,000 men on active service in her three armed forces.

Canada has an army, in Britain, consisting of two army corps: one corps of three infantry divisions, the other of two armoured divisions. Together with ancillary troops, the army overseas numbers about 180,000 men, all volunteers. The number is being steadily increased. In the army in Canada, there are in addition some 210,000 men on active service. Some tens of thousands more are enrolled in the reserve army.

In the Navy, Canada has now a personnel of close to 50,000. The Royal Canadian Air Force has a total strength, at home and abroad, of approximately 125,000 men.

Explained in relative terms, these figures, on the basis of a population equal to that of the United States, would mean about 7,000,000 men on active service in the three armed forces; an army now overseas of over 2,000,000 men well trained and ready to strike at the enemy; over 2,500,000 men in the army on this continent; a Navy with a personnel of 600,000 men and an air force of 1,500,000.

Just before French resistance collapsed in 1940, Canadian troops had actually landed in France, ready to go into battle. After the fall of France, ships of the Canadian Navy assisted in the evacuation of British, Canadian and Polish soldiers from French territory.

The Army and the Navy

Canada's army has been in actual combat only at Hong Kong and Dieppe. For our troops in Britain, the prolonged period of waiting for action has been a real hardship. It has not been easy for them to watch the forces of the other nations of the British Commonwealth engaged in battles they were not able to share. They are proud that they have been assigned the task of guarding from attack the world's oldest citadel of freedom. Since June, 1940, they have stood at the very point where they would be the first to be hurled into a counter-stroke against an invader. They know that at any moment, they may be called upon to cross the English channel, or to fight on any other front. The Commander-in-Chief, General McNaughton, has sought to make the Canadian army in Britain, for its size, the best trained and equipped, the most highly integrated and effective striking force in the world.

The technical units of Canada's army have done their part in strengthening the defences of Britain. Special engineering detachments have done valuable service in fortifying Gibraltar. Forestry units have been at work in Scotland. More recently, to supplement Britain's civil defences, Canada organized a corps of fire-fighters, a part of which is now overseas.

The main task of Canada's Navy has been to escort convoys across the North Atlantic. Our Navy is performing more than a full third of that vital and hazardous duty. It also has its part in anti-submarine patrol work on both coasts of this continent, and in the Caribbean. Ships of the Canadian Navy shared in the recent operations in the Aleutians. Seventeen of our corvettes helped to escort American troops to North Africa. Their crews rejoiced at the opportunity to assist in the landing of men and munitions in Morocco and Algeria. Incidentally, the convoy carried some 40,000 Canadian mechanized vehicles.

Air Training and Aerial Combat

In the early stages of the war, it was decided that Canada's air force should concentrate mainly on air training. This meant foregoing immediately spectacular achievements in favour of slower but ultimately far larger and more effective results.

The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan was entered into by Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand in 1939. The Plan is a co-operative undertaking in the training of fighting airmen. Its training centres and schools are located in all parts of the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Its graduates are to-day in every quarter of the globe. Because of the magnitude of the undertaking, President Roosevelt has called Canada "the Aerodrome of Democracy."

The Royal Canadian Air Force is also charged with the protection of Canadian Coasts. It assists in guarding allied shipping on the Atlantic and the Pacific. Our Air Force and our Army, as well as our Navy, are co-operating with American forces in Alaska and the Aleutians, in Labrador, Newfoundland and other islands of the Atlantic.

There are very few who even to-day begin to realize how large is the number of Canadian airmen who have been in action in the different theatres of war. Our airmen, in squadrons of the Royal Canadian Air Force and in the Royal Air Force, are fighting to-day on almost every front in this global war. From our Atlantic Coast, through Britain, Continental Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, India, the Far East and the Pacific, around the world to our own western shores, they share, with the other forces of the United Nations, their perils and glories wherever there is conflict in the skies.

You will be interested in knowing that in North Africa a number of Canadian navigators, air gunners and wireless operators are serving temporarily in the United States Army Air Corps.

Canada's War Production

So far, I have referred only to our military effort. I should like, now, to speak of Canadian war production.

It is natural that Canada should be one of the main sources of raw materials and foodstuffs for the Allies. We produce 95% of all the nickel and 40% of all the aluminum used by the United Nations. We are supplying about 200 pounds of food per annum for every man, woman and child in the United Kingdom. More remarkable is the development of Canadian production of the machines, weapons and munitions of war. The change from a peace-time to a war-time economy represents for our country an industrial revolution.

In our arms and munitions plants and shipyards, about 1,000,000 war workers are employed. In terms of comparative population this would represent a force of some 12,000,000 workers in the United States. This number takes no account of the additional hundreds of thousands of miners, lumbermen, farmers, fishermen, transport workers and others engaged in essential war service.

I might mention a few outstanding achievements of Canadian war industry.

Canada has the largest small arms plant on this continent, and one of the largest in the world. We have the second largest tank arsenal on the continent. In cargo shipbuilding, Canada occupies third place among the United Nations. The automotive industry has already produced more than 300,000 military vehicles. We produce guns of every kind from rifles and light machine guns to field artillery and naval guns. Aircraft production has risen from 40 a year, to 400 a month. In addition to smaller naval craft, our shipyards have built more than 140 corvettes and minesweepers. We are also building destroyers.

An Arsenal of the United Nations

Like the United States and the United Kingdom, Canada is an arsenal for all the United Nations. More than two-thirds of our war production is supplied to the allied forces. I have already referred to Canadian military vehicles recently landed in Northwest Africa. Almost all the mechanical transport being used by the British Eighth Army in Egypt and Libya was also made in Canada. In the present year we have supplied Russia with tanks to the value of \$50,000,000 and with other war supplies to the value of another \$50,000,000. Canadian clothing in considerable quantities is helping to keep the Soviet armies warm. Canadian artillery, small arms and ammunition have been supplied to China. Motorized equipment, arms and ammunition from Canada are also being used in Australia and the Southwest Pacific. Military supplies of every kind have been furnished in quantity to Britain.

As a direct contribution to aid in the winning of the war, the parliament of Canada this year appropriated one billion dollars to pay Canadian producers for war materials and supplies needed by the fighting forces of the United Nations. These supplies were a gift freely contributed in the common cause.

Canada's industrial war production this year will be worth some \$2,500,000,000. Another \$800,000,000 should be added for raw materials and foodstuffs going to our allies. To you who are accustomed to astronomical figures these amounts may not seem dazzling. They are, however, comparable to a total war production in your country, for one year only, of some \$40,000,000,000.

It is deeply gratifying for Canadians to know that in the present campaign in Africa, Canadian mechanized equipment has proved so trustworthy; that Canadian tanks using Canadian ammunition are in active combat on the Russian front; that in China, Canadian guns and Canadian ammunition are being employed against the Japanese; that a gun is being produced in Canada every minute of the day, seven days a week; and that the products of our soil, our mines, our shipyards and our factories are helping to wage the battle of freedom in every quarter of the globe.

The Strong Arm of a Good Neighbour

Canada's war effort could never have reached its present proportions but for the co-operation we have received from the United States from the very outset of the war.

In its initial stages, our war industry depended in large measure on your machine tools, your steel, and your coal. Air training in Canada could not have developed so rapidly without American aircraft and American petroleum products. We all remember how, after the fall of France in June, 1940, Britain stood alone in Europe —a solitary citadel of Freedom; a citadel garrisoned, however, by far too few troops, and those troops, after Dunkirk, woefully short of arms. We remember how the United States rushed weapons and munitions across the Atlantic. To help in that hour of need, Canada emptied her arsenals of their guns and ammunition. We sent to Britain all the fighting airmen and trained troops we could muster. Our few destroyers, leaving our own shores virtually unprotected, were sent to co-operate with the British Navy in European waters.

Canada was able to strip the defences of her coasts, to send her fighting ships and planes and her trained fighting men to Britain because we knew we could count on the strong arm of a good neighbour. Nor could Britain herself, in those fateful days, have hoped to weather the storm had she, too, not realized that further aid from the United States would also be hers.

Constructive Examples of Mutual Aid

The recognition by Canada and the United States of joint interest in their common security subsequently found expression in the Ogdensburg Agreement establishing the Permanent Joint Board on Defence. A similar community of interest in war production found expression in the Hyde Park Declaration.

Only the other day, another vast achievement of Canadian-American co-operation was virtually completed. I refer, of course, to the military highway to Alaska. Confronted with a common problem of making the west coast secure, our two countries saw the necessity of a series of military airfields between the United States and Alaska as a vital strategic factor in the defence of both our countries. We also saw the need for a military highway which would connect the airfields, and itself be a supply route to Alaska. To this great enterprise, fraught with possibilities as yet untold, Canada contributed the airfields, the United States the highway.

The United States and Canada in working out their joint plans of military and economic co-operation have done much more than provide a strong defence for this continent. As our two countries have already done with the Rush-Bagot agreement, through the International Joint Commission, and in our reciprocal trade agreements, we have created a working model of international co-operation.

In an exchange of notes which took place to-day, the governments of Canada and the United States have recorded their agreement as to the major objectives of post-war international economic policy. To these objectives most of the other United Nations have also subscribed.

This agreement on general principles is only a beginning. It remains to translate its aims into definite policies. This once achieved, we shall again have afforded a constructive example of the way in which common policies can be worked out to serve mutual ends, and to meet the practical needs of mankind.

What Freedom Owes to All Who Resist

It is now wholly apparent that Britain and the United States have a common interest in the defeat of the Axis powers. It is equally clear that the common interest extends to all parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and to all the United Nations. We who are still free should appreciate to the full what we owe to other countries. We cannot begin to measure the debt we owe to those countries which have been invaded; and which, at a sacrifice of life, altogether unparalleled, have kept fighting on in order to preserve their freedom. Nor can we say what we also owe to those countries which have lost their freedom. If we on this continent have thus

far escaped invasion, either by German forces from across the Atlantic, or by Japanese forces from across the Pacific, it is because of the resistance of other nations.

Who will say that the freedom of all nations might not have been lost but for the resistance of the Chinese and the Russians? Who can begin to estimate what freedom owes to the people of Czechoslovakia, to the Poles, to the Norwegians, to the Dutch, to the Belgians, to the Yugoslavs, and to the Greeks? Who can estimate the debt that freedom owes to the fighting French? Today, we pay a special tribute to the patriotism and sacrifice of the brave officers and men of the French fleet at Toulon, who have revealed anew the true spirit of France. In spirit, the people of France have always been of the company of Free Nations.

Every nation that resisted the foe, however short its resistance may have been, has contributed something to the preservation of freedom, something to the ultimate destruction of the Axis powers. Every day gained by their resistance afforded precious time to the countries that were still free to build up their strength and to combine their forces. Perhaps, by now, we have learned that it is to mutual aid we owe the liberty we still enjoy. It is not less true of nations, than of individuals, that "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

The Tasks of the United Nations

It is quite true that, in no small measure, self-defence has been the motive which has caused us to seek the defeat of the enemy in lands, and on shores, other than our own. The war is teaching us all that the things we hold in common are so much greater than the things that divide. It is helping to enforce the truth that "we are members one of another." We are learning that to preserve our common heritage we must help each other all we can, wherever the need is apparent, as soon and as much as we can.

For the nations that are still free, today's task is in large part one of self-preservation. Let no successes of the hour minimize the magnitude of that task. Only a supreme effort, on every front, can save suffering and sacrifice greater than all that has gone before.

Tomorrow's task, which is a part of today's, will be one of liberation of the countries which have lost their freedom. For the war has taught that freedom is one and indivisible. Without freedom, there can be no lasting peace; and without peace, there can be no enduring freedom. If peace and freedom are to be our portion, an end must be put, once and for all, to aggression and domination on the part of any power.

I believe it will yet be seen by the peoples of Germany, Italy and Japan that, to the countries which have broken the might of their militarist regimes, they will owe a freedom which otherwise would have been lost to them for centuries.

Liberation once achieved, there will remain the task of restoration; and restoration, if it is to look to the future rather than to the past, means transformation as well. In that transformation, we must aim at economic freedom, not less than political freedom.

“...true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free!”

The Real Issue

In a recent message I received from Chiang Kai-Shek, the Generalissimo of China said: “We are now fighting shoulder to shoulder against the forces of evil until victory is won. When peace comes, I trust that we shall continue to work together, then as now, in that spirit of closest co-operation for the making of a new world which will secure freedom and equality for all.”

We are fighting against the forces of evil. Nothing could be truer than that. We shall have missed altogether the inner meaning of the present world conflict if we see in it merely a struggle for material gain, a lust for power, even a greed so unlimited as to be satisfied only with world domination. The Nazi purpose is something infinitely more sinister and dangerous. It is the total destruction of an order of society based on those principles on which alone the only true freedom—moral and spiritual freedom—can be attained.

There is not one of the ten commandments which Nazi Youth has not been instructed to repudiate; not one of the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount which they have not been taught to despise. “Evil, be thou my good” has become the Nazi creed. For Germany to win this war would mean the destruction of the free spirit of man. It is ours to keep inviolate the majesty of the human spirit. It is ours to defend the fortress of man’s soul.

The New World Order

The war for freedom will not have been won when the fear of Nazi and Japanese domination has been destroyed. The era of freedom will be achieved only as human welfare and social security become the main concern of men and nations. The new order must be a *world* order. It must be governed by a universal rule of law. It must be based on *human* rights and not on the rights of property, privilege or position.

In the modern world, Nationalism is the strongest political force, Industrialism the strongest economic force. Over many years,

in both Germany and Japan, Nationality and Industry were perverted from their true purpose which is the service of Humanity, to the false ends of material power and world domination. If men are to be truly free, both Nationality and Industry must be made to serve, not to enslave mankind.

To have Nationality and Industry serve Humanity, an end must be put to monopoly of power by any country and by any class. In both, there must be government by consent. In the State and Industry, control should be broadly representative and not narrowly autocratic. In the new order, economic freedom will be as important as political freedom.

The war has shown us that the way of monopoly, of unrestricted power, whether political or economic, is a way that leads to destruction, desolation, and death. The only path to prosperity and peace is the path of equality, of co-operation, and of human brotherhood. The hope of the future lies in the universal recognition of our common humanity.

We deplore the extension of war to all parts of the world. In the perspective of Time, this may yet prove to have been a blessing in disguise. Only in this way perhaps, could we have come to realize that the interests of mankind are one, and that the claims of Humanity are supreme.

A New World Unity

I have sought to give their meaning to the storms of human passion which have swept the oceans of the world, and arrayed nations, continents and hemispheres alike, in conflict the one against the other. It is a conflict which owes its origin to two wholly different interpretations of life, and of the purpose of life: the one, material; the other, spiritual. We have seen to what destruction and desolation the material interpretation has led.

The spiritual interpretation of life teaches us that all human life is sacred; that we are members one of another; that the things which we have in common are greater than those which divide; that each is his brother's keeper. Those great truths have been given new meaning by the war. The way of co-operation and mutual aid is not only the road to victory for the United Nations; it is also the path to freedom and equality for all.

Victory and Peace, some day, will crown the sacrifices of those who fight for freedom. When that day comes, the peoples of the British Commonwealth and the people of the United States will be found at each other's side, united more closely than ever. But they will be part of a larger company. In that company, all the Nations now united in the defence of freedom will remain united in the service of mankind.

